

# SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress  
1st Session

Vote No. 407

September 11, 1995, 5:52 p.m.  
Page S-13196 Temp. Record

## WELFARE REFORM BILL/Child Care Consolidation & Eligibility Changes

**SUBJECT:** Family Self-Sufficiency Act of 1995 . . . H.R. 4. Kassebaum amendment No. 2522 to the Dole modified perfecting amendment No. 2280 to the committee substitute amendment.

### ACTION: AMENDMENT AGREED TO, 76-22

**SYNOPSIS:** As reported with a committee substitute amendment, H.R. 4, the Family Self-Sufficiency Act of 1995, will overhaul six of the Nation's ten largest welfare programs.

The Dole modified perfecting amendment would strike the provisions of the committee substitute amendment and insert in lieu thereof substitute provisions, entitled "The Work Opportunity Act of 1995."

**The Kassebaum amendment** would require States that use funding for child care services under any Federal program (except for the quality set-aside provisions of the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Program) to expend those funds consistent with the requirements, standards, and criteria used in the administration of the CCDBG Program. It would also eliminate the State option to decrease its CCDBG funding by 30 percent by transferring funds between the CCDBG and the family assistance block grants. The Finance Committee would retain jurisdiction over family assistance block grants; the Labor Committee would retain jurisdiction over the CCDBG Program. (The CCDBG Program primarily provides child care assistance to low-income families at risk of going on welfare. The quality set-aside provisions are to allow States to set aside 15 percent of their CCDBG funds for quality improvement efforts. Under the Dole amendment, current Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) child care programs would be rolled into State family assistance block grants. State spending on child care programs using those grant funds would not be subject to CCDBG requirements. The Dole amendment would consolidate the State Dependent Care Planning and Development Grants and the Child Development Associate Credential Scholarship program within the CCDBG program, would authorize \$1 billion for fiscal year (FY) 1996, and would authorize such sums as necessary through FY 2000.)

**Those favoring** the amendment contended:

(See other side)

YEAS (76)				NAYS (22)		NOT VOTING (2)	
Republican (31 or 60%)		Democrats (45 or 98%)		Republicans (21 or 40%)	Democrats (1 or 2%)	Republicans (2)	Democrats (0)
Abraham	Hatch	Akaka	Hollings	Ashcroft	Moynihan	Gramm <sup>-2</sup>	
Bennett	Hatfield	Baucus	Inouye	Brown		Simpson <sup>-2AN</sup>	
Bond	Helms	Biden	Johnston	Coverdell			
Burns	Hutchison	Bingaman	Kennedy	D'Amato			
Campbell	Jeffords	Boxer	Kerrey	Dole			
Chafee	Kassebaum	Bradley	Kerry	Faircloth			
Coats	Kempthorne	Breaux	Kohl	Grassley			
Cochran	Lugar	Bryan	Lautenberg	Gregg			
Cohen	Murkowski	Bumpers	Leahy	Inhofe			
Craig	Pressler	Byrd	Levin	Kyl			
DeWine	Santorum	Conrad	Lieberman	Lott			
Domenici	Shelby	Daschle	Mikulski	Mack			
Frist	Snowe	Dodd	Moseley-Braun	McCain			
Gorton	Specter	Dorgan	Murray	McConnell			
Grams	Stevens	Exon	Nunn	Nickles			
	Warner	Feingold	Pell	Packwood			
		Feinstein	Pryor	Roth			
		Ford	Reid	Smith			
		Glenn	Robb	Thomas			
		Graham	Rockefeller	Thompson			
		Harkin	Sarbanes	Thurmond			
		Heflin	Simon				
			Wellstone				

#### EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

#### SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

The Kassebaum amendment would provide a single, unified approach to child care that would prevent disruptions in the provision of services. The way the Dole amendment is currently structured such disruptions would be guaranteed. The Dole amendment would let States have, or not have, nearly any type of child care programs they wished in their efforts to move people off of welfare and into the workforce. Once they were off the welfare rolls, though, they would move from those programs to the CCDBG program, and would be subject to its requirements. Allowing this disruption to occur does not make sense.

As strong supporters of the CCDBG program, we have accordingly proposed requiring all child care programs to follow the rules of the CCDBG program. In essence, the CCDBG program is a sliding-scale program to keep low-income workers off welfare as they try to move up the economic ladder. In recognition of the differences among the States, it is up to each State to determine the scale that it uses. Approximately 700,000 low-income Americans currently rely on this assistance.

We have offered the Kassebaum amendment in a spirit of compromise. An earlier proposal which we supported would have made the AFDC child care programs part of the CCDBG program; however, that proposal raised questions of jurisdiction, because it would have transferred oversight over those programs from the Finance Committee to the Labor Committee. Some Senators thought it appropriate to retain Finance Committee oversight. The Kassebaum amendment would retain that oversight, though funds would be spent in accordance with CCDBG rules. The Kassebaum amendment would also strike the provision in the Dole amendment that would allow States to transfer funds from the CCDBG program to the family assistance block grant program. We favor striking this provision for two reasons. First, we are fearful that Governors would use the authority to transfer CCDBG funds to programs unrelated to child care. Second, even if they were to use the authority to transfer the funds to other child care programs, we do not believe other child care programs are as important as this sliding-scale program.

We do not see Federal child care assistance as the option of first resort nor do we see it as a permanent entitlement. However, the fact remains that some people are not in circumstances in which they have a family member, friend, or other means of affordable child care available. Without some Government help with child care, the bottom rung of the economic ladder is too slippery for such people to grasp. They need help in moving up until they can make it on their own. The alternative is a lifetime of dependency. If there is no coordination between the family assistance child care programs and the CCDBG program, our fear is that many welfare recipients will find a rung missing from the ladder, and will fall back into dependency. The Kassebaum amendment would eliminate this danger. We therefore urge its adoption.

**Those opposing the amendment contended:**

The assumption underlying the Kassebaum amendment is that welfare recipients, when they move into the workforce, are going to be unable to provide child care without Federal support. We reject that assumption. We do not believe that of necessity that once welfare recipients become productive members of society they are going to need the Federal Government to make their child care arrangements for them and to pay their child care bills. The vast majority of low-income Americans are able to take care of their own children without resorting to Federal handouts. Certainly some low-income Americans have been part of the CCDBG program since it was created in 1990, but most of them have not, even when they have been eligible for assistance.

An underlying purpose of this welfare reform bill is to promote personal responsibility. In keeping with that purpose, we think some Governors may wish to use their welfare block grant funds to combine cash assistance and block grant assistance into a single cash payment to welfare families. We would support such a use. Those Senators who are fearful that families may not have sense enough to budget to provide for their children's child care are, in our opinion, underestimating those families. Low-income wage earners, middle-income wage earners, and high-income wage earners all budget their money. They are capable of seeking care for their children, they are capable of negotiating fair child care rates, and they undoubtedly act with the best interests of their children at heart. Welfare recipients are no different. They have exactly the same capabilities and they care just as much for their children. As we move them into the workforce, we should not assume that the need for continued dependency will be the norm.

At present there are 13 million AFDC recipients and there are 700,000 Americans dependent on the CCDBG program. Our colleagues' implicit assumption is that those 13 million recipients will end up receiving CCDBG assistance. We certainly do not intend for that result. We think that most States, if given the ability to try innovative solutions to ending welfare, will manage to make most welfare recipients truly independent. The Kassebaum amendment would stifle that innovation. It would require every State to follow to the letter the Federal requirements of the CCDBG program when trying to get people off the welfare rolls and into gainful employment. Once off of welfare they would seamlessly move into dependency on Federal CCDBG child care funds.

We oppose such a depressing result. This reform bill should not be structured to trade one welfare addiction for another. Most low-income Americans are struggling to make ends meet without Federal assistance and they are succeeding with pride and dignity. Their lives are not arranged and controlled for them by Federal bureaucrats who assume their general incompetence. Welfare dependency destroys the human spirit. We do not have poor people in America in the traditional sense of the word--the average welfare recipient in America is economically better off than most people in the world. However the broken homes, the violence, the drugs, the promiscuity, and all the other problems that are found in communities that rely on welfare make them the among the poorest communities that have ever existed. In our opinion, the Kassebaum amendment would perpetuate these problems by trading one dependency for another. We therefore strongly urge our colleagues to reject this amendment.

